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A

FUNERAL SERMON

On the DEATH of

Madam *Hutchinſon.*

THE Character *and* Hope *of the* Righteous
Conſider'd, in a

SERMON

Preach'd the
LORD'S-DAY after the Funeral of
Madam *Lydia Hutchinſon*,
THE
VIRTUOUS CONSORT
OF THE HONOURABLE
Edward Hutchinſon, Eſq;
Who departed this Life, *July* 10. 1748.
Aged 61.

By *Samuel Checkley*, A. M.
Paſtor of the ſecond Church of CHRIST in *Boſton*.

Iſaiah 3. 10. *Say ye to the Righteous, it ſhall be well with him.*

Job 19. 25, 26, 27. *For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter Day upon the Earth; and though after my Skin, Worms deſtroy this Body, yet in my Fleſh, ſhall I ſee God, whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf, and mine Eyes behold, and not not another, though my Reins be conſumed within me.*

BOSTON: *N. E.* Printed by J. DRAPER,
for D. HENCHMAN, in *Cornhill*. 1748.

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To the Honourable

Edward Hutchinſon, Eſq;

SIR,

THE late diſtreſſing Providence of God in your Family was the Occaſion of the following Sermon. The Relation in which I ſtand to that Church which your deceaſed Conſort adorn'd, I thought, called upon me to bear Teſtimony for her Virtues, and ſo to do Honour to divine Grace, which wrought them in her Soul.

It must be, *Sir*, that you sustain a great Loss, how great no one but yourself can conceive of. The long Continuance with which God favoured you together, no doubt made the Parting more sorrowful, and raised the Springs of Grief: But as you lived in Hopes, we believe you parted in Hopes of another and better Meeting. May this Consideration be a mighty Support to your Spirits. May you glorify God in your exalted Station and advanced Age, and at last, with all your's, possess the unfading Honours and superior Pleasures of the beatifick State.

This is the hearty Prayer

Of, *Sir*, your devoted,

Humble Servant,

Samuel Checkley.

A FUNERAL SERMON.

PROVERBS XIV. 32.

----The Righteous hath Hope in his Death.

HOPE and Fear are the two governing Principles in humane Nature; accordingly if we examine the Actions of Men, and trace them to their Fountain, we ſhall find that either their Hopes or their Fears were the Occaſion of them. Whatever Methods Men are in the Proſecution of, it is the Hope of ſome Benefit that lies at the Foundation, Fear and Sollicitude leaſt they ſhould miſs of their Aim, are equally influential. Theſe Principles are deeply rivited in the Breaſt of every Creature, in whom God hath enkindled the Light of Reaſon; and it is a great Favour vouchſafed to us by the Author of our Beings that theſe Springs of Actions are ſo deeply rooted within us. And was it not that our Taſte for true Happineſs is vitiated, theſe Principles would be productive of the moſt glorious Effects:

Effects: Our Hopes would influence us to purſue that Happineſs only, for which we were at firſt deſign'd; our Fears would engage us to avoid every Thing that would have the leaſt Tendency to debar us of it. But alas, the Caſe is quite otherwiſe; tho' all are governed by the ſame Principles, yet they are not directed to right Ends. Tho' all have a Principle of Hope, yet it is not founded upon a right Bottom, it is not excited from a View of the true ſubſtantial Nature of Happineſs; nor doth it produce thoſe good Effects which a Hope rightly founded would do. In the ſame manner we may argue concerning the Principle of Fear, it is not moved from an Apprehenſion of the neceſſary and unalterable Evil which there is in Sin, and ſo doth not bring forth thoſe genuine Fruits, which a religious Fear always does.—But then you will ſay, Wherein appears the Advantage of theſe interwoven Principles, if ſome are actually diſſerved by them? We reply, That becauſe ſome are not ſuitably influenced by their Hopes and Fears, it will not follow, that they are of no Service: We may as well argue againſt the Principle of Reaſon it ſelf, and ſay, that becauſe ſome Men act irrationally, Reaſon is not ſo great a Favour, as many imagine. Should theſe ſecret Springs of Action lead us to purſue our future, everlaſting Welfare, ſhould we not eſteem them Favours, and bleſs God for them. It is thro' our own Default that they looſe their good Effect upon us. But then you will ſay further, What is the Reaſon that we are not ſuitably influenced by theſe inbred Principles? Did not God at firſt make Man, with a natural Inclination to proſecute his own Happineſs? We anſwer, That Man was at firſt made with a ſerious Deſire after that Felicity God deſigned him for; but the Truth of the Caſe is, the Views of Man are very much changed by his Fall, he is miſtaken in his Apprehenſions of true Bleſſedneſs, he takes that to be for his greateſt Advantage and Comfort, which if depended upon, will prove the greateſt Infelicity

Infelicity to him. This is evident from the Practice of Men, and while they form this immature Judgment, they will neceſſarily purſue Happineſs in a wrong Path. —Perhaps you may add further, Doth not Man deſire that which will make him really happy? We anſwer, That an unregenerate Man doth not deſire or hope to be happy, for the Sake of any real poſitive Good which there is in Happineſs; all the Happineſs he deſires is a Freedom from Pain and Miſery; and tho' he would not dare to tell you, that he ſhould not like to dwell in God's Preſence; yet his Practice plainly declares that he would take no Satisfaction in it. Thoſe who hope for true ſubſtantial Happineſs upon good Grounds, are ſuch whoſe Hope is purified, who are wrought upon by the Spirit of God, and made to ſee the real intrinſic Excellency of Happineſs. All ſuch have a good Hope, they are among the Righteous in the Text, who have a Hope, that is a great Support to their Spirits, amidſt the various Calamities of Life, yea, even in Death itſelf. Is it not to be feared of the Multitudes that entertain Hopes of Happineſs, great Numbers are deceiving themſelves with falſe Hopes; they compaſs themſelves about with Sparks of their own kindling. Some have a Hope that is built only upon the Mercy of God; of this Sort are all openly wicked Perſons; ſome hope for Happineſs on the account of their religious Performances, of this Sort are all Hypocrites in Religion; ſome hope for the Mercy of God through Faith in Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, of this Sort are thoſe mentioned in the Text. Seeing then that the greateſt Part of the Chriſtian World are Self-deceivers, what Care ſhould we all take that our Hopes be well eſtabliſhed. You may be deceived, and ſo may I: If either of us ſhould, what dreadful Horror and Diſappointment will ſeize us at Death, and in the Day of Judgment! Let us in the Fear of God attend to the following Particulars,

First. Let us consider *the Character of the righteous Man.*

Secondly. Let us consider *the Nature and Effects of this righteous Man's Hope.*

Thirdy. Let us especially take a View *of this Hope as exercis'd at Death.*

Fourthly. Consider, *None but a righteous Man can have a good Hope.*

First. Let us consider *the Character of the righteous Man* in the Text.

It is peculiar to all God's Children that they are righteous. This doth not mean, that they are absolutely and perfectly righteous, for as all have sinned, so all have lost the moral Rectitude of their Natures; and tho' there is a great Difference between the present and former State of God's Children, yet they can't be supposed to be universally righteous. Notwithstanding theChange made in them, they commit many Sins, there are many Defects in their Obedience. God sees Sin in his own Children, and punisheth them for it, as the Scriptures and Christian Experience testify. How dangerous is it then for any to espouse that Soul-ruining Principle, that Believers are free from Sin in this Life. The Righteousness of Believers consists in several Things, which we shall mention.

First, It is an *imputed Righteousness.* God having accepted the Sacrifice and Satisfaction of his Son, imputes his Righteousness to their Souls, on the Account of which He as freely accepts them, as he did his Son's Obedience. *For as by one Man's Disobedience, many were made Sinners; so by the Obedience of one,* (i. e. Christ,) *shall many be made righteous.* Rom. 5. 19. Tho' the Fall of our first Parents, we are all become guilty

guilty and unrighteous. *There is none that doeth good, no not one.* Pſal. 14. 1. We are rightly called *a Seed of Evil-doers*: We have broken Covenant with God, and ſtand condemned to die in a ſpiritual Senſe. The Law and Juſtice of God have their Demands upon us; and it is impoſſible that we ſhould ſtand right in God's Eyes, conſidered in ourſelves, as we did before our Fall; i. e. that we ſhould yield that perfect Obedience which the Law requires; or, could we do it, yet as God hath a Right to all our Service, our perfect Obedience would be but preſent Duty, and no ways atone for paſt Neglect. But Chriſt, as our Surety, hath undertaken for us. *He hath been made Sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him,* 2 Cor. 5. 21. God hath been pleaſed to declare Himſelf ready to receive Sinners, to reſtore them to his Love and Favour through Chriſt. The Righteouſneſs of Chriſt is perfect and compleat. The Scheme of Redemption was admirably well contrived and calculated to do Honour to God's Law: Chriſt being a divine Perſon, his Righteouſneſs is fully and everlaſtingly ſatisfactory; Nothing could be done in a way of Suffering that could make the Law appear more honourable; the eternal Damnation of the Sinner in Hell would not do ſo much Honour as the Sufferings of Chriſt: Theſe have paid a full Satisfaction; but the other never would pay it in full. — It is for the Sake of what Chriſt hath done, that any are made righteous. We are afraid there are many that talk of Juſtification by Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, that know not what they ſay, nor whereof they affirm. For the Help of ſuch we would ſay, that by the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt is meant, his active and paſſive Obedience to the Law; it is this that God imputes to the Sinner. — But then, Is there no Condition of Juſtification? Do all ſhare equally in the Priviledge? We anſwer, No.—Many, notwithſtanding that Righteouſneſs which Chriſt hath wrought out, remain in a State

of Sin and Condemnation; and in this State they will remain, till in the Exercise of Faith, they are enabled to embrace this Righteousness as their's, and build their Hopes upon it. Let the Scripture decide the Matter, *He that believeth shall be saved: He that believeth not shall be damned*, Mark 16. 16.

The Righteous in the Text are those that have seen their doleful Condition by the Fall, as they lie open to the Stroke of Justice, in the Execution of the Threatening of the Law. They are brought to see in themselves nothing but Sin and Unrighteousness, and to acknowledge the Justice of God, if he should bring the whole threatned Punishment upon them, even everlasting Misery. Being brought to this humbling Sense, they see a surprizing Beauty and Fitness in that Righteousness which the Word of God reveals and offers. As it is offered to the Acceptance of all in general, they confidently lay hold of it as their own, and plead it before God: "O, says the Sinner, "My own Righteousness is as filthy "Rags, it can do nothing but condemn me: How then "shall I be able to appear before my Judge now, and "in the great Day? Blessed be God that Christ my "dear Saviour hath wrought out a Righteousness for "me, and offers it to me. Lord, I accept this thine "Offer: Lord give me Strength to lay hold of this "Righteousness; for on this I depend only to divert "thine Anger, and procure thy Smiles." God hereupon justifies the Sinner, He looks upon him as a righteous Person, and gives him to taste the Sweetness of pardoning Mercy and Grace. In this Sense are the Righteous justified.

But then, They may be called Righteous, as the Image of God is instamped on them. They are made holy. This Holiness hath no Hand in Justification; it is that by which they are afterwards made meet for Heaven.

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The Image of God, which is created in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs, is refix'd upon them. They follow hard after Holineſs. They don't think that Chriſt's bringing himſelf under Obligations to obey the Law, makes void their Obligations. No: They eſteem themſelves under more ſtrict Engagements ſtill to be holy: All the Powers of their Minds are ſanctified, their Hearts are purified, they have holy Thoughts and Diſpoſitions; and from the holy Principles within, they are influenced to maintain holy Lives. Sanctification always accompanies our being juſtified. By this we mean more than a Phariſaical Righteouſneſs, or viſible Conformity to the Law. Thoſe who are juſtified are changed in the Temper of their Minds; it will not ſuffice them that they are outwardly religious; they will endeavour to bring all their Thoughts, Purpoſes and Reſolutions under the Regulation of God's holy Oracles.

If we take Righteouſneſs to be common Juſtice and Equity, the Perſons mentioned in the Text are righteous in this Senſe. They look upon themſelves under Obligations to do Juſtice to all around them. They will be true to their Word and Promiſe; and endeavour to give all their Due. They labour to keep a Conſcience void of Offence towards Man, as well as towards God. They have other Things to move them to this, beſides the juſt Debt due to their Neighbour, as, the Honour of Chriſt and his Religion, which lie very near their Hearts.

Secondly. We are to conſider *the Nature and Effects of the righteous Man's Hope. The Righteous hath Hope*, ſays the Text. Hope in general, is an Expectation to receive ſome future Good; it ſuppoſeth that there is a Probability of obtaining it, and it puts the Soul upon endeavouring after it. This Good is ſomething future, for we cannot hope for that we are already in the

the Poſſeſſion of: There is likewiſe a Proſpect of coming at the Good hoped for, elſe no reaſonable Creature can hope to obtain it. True, we may deſire that which we have no reaſonable Hope for; but we cannot upon Grounds hope for all that we deſire. That which the righteous Man hopes for is in ſpecial ſpiritual Bleſſings. As to ſome of the Bleſſings of the Covenant, as Peace, Pardon and Reconciliation, theſe he already poſſeſſeth, and he many times rejoiceth in a Senſe of them: His Hope is eſpecially carried out after the other Priviledges of the Covenant, as perfect Freedom from all Sin and Trouble, the full Fruition of God, and the immediate Viſion of Chriſt.

This Hope is founded upon the Mercy of God, thro' Chriſt, and a comfortable Senſe that we have been enabled to comply with the Terms of Salvation. The Work of Redemption, and the Application of it to the Souls of Sinners, is all of free Grace. Thoſe who are ſaved have nothing to boaſt of, the Crown muſt be ſet on the Redeemer's Head, and that be the Language, *Not unto us, not unto us, Lord; but unto thy Name be all the Glory.* God is gracious and full of Compaſſion; He hath rich Bleſſings ſtored up in his Son Jeſus Chriſt, to beſtow upon poor periſhing Sinners: There is not one Sinner but is welcome to them all. He offers Chriſt to be their's; and if Chriſt is their's, then all Things will become their's. The righteous Man with Aſtoniſhment looks upon this Love and Grace, and hopes in the Mercy of God, that He will at laſt put him in the Poſſeſſion of the whole of that Happineſs which Chriſt hath purchaſed.— But then his Hope is not built barely upon the Mercy of God. It is to be feared that many have no other Foundation than this, to reſt this Hopes upon; and verily this conſidered alone is no Foundation in our preſent fallen State. We have all forfeited God's gracious Regards, and we muſt ſubmit to his

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Terms, before we can hope for his Favour. God hath in his infinite Wiſdom contrived, and by his almighty Power effected a Way to reinſtate many in the Enjoyment of all poſitive Happineſs: The Condition is, Believing in Chriſt, accepting Him as a Prophet, Prieſt and King. This Method of Salvation is every Way worthy of the Perfections of God; and ſuited to Man's reaſonable Nature. We dare not ſay, that God could not have found out any other Way; but as He hath ſeen fit to pitch upon this Method, we ought to conclude that it is the beſt Way.—The righteous Man hath heartily complied with this Method of Salvation, and therefore it is that he entertains Hopes of future Happineſs:—He finds by an Examination into his own Heart, that the Spirit of Chriſt hath been at Work upon his Soul, accompliſhing the Deſigns of God's Grace. He hath had a Diſcovery of the Neceſſity of a Saviour, the Being of a Saviour, and the Suitableneſs of the Saviour for him: He hath been made willing to receive Chriſt upon any Terms; and as that is the Goſpel Call, *Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved*, he hath cried to God for this Faith, and God hath given him Power to believe. He finds that he can truſt freely and entirely to Chriſt's Satisfaction for Acceptance with, and the Approbation of God: He finds within himſelf a free Diſpoſition to ſubmit to Chriſt's Laws and Commandments: He no longer conſults Fleſh and Blood for the Rule of his Conduct, but gives himſelf up to the Word and Spirit of Chriſt, to be led and guided all the Days of his Life.—Finding theſe Things wrought within him, he lifts up the Hands that hang down and ſtrengthens the feeble Knees: He hopes in God with Freedom and Confidence, for the Beſtowment of preſent and future Good; and verily what ſpiritual Good may not a Soul hope for, that can find ſuch Diſpoſitions as theſe. It muſt be perfectly pleaſing to God to ſee the Sinner thus ſubmitting himſelf to Him; for it is what

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He hath commanded and called upon him to do. God gives the Sinner the fulleſt Aſſurance in his Word, that his Hopes ſhall not fail him; but that he ſhall before long come to the Perfection of Happineſs in the upper World of Glory.

Let us conſider ſome of the *good Effects* of this *Hope* of the righteous Man: And here we may learn whether our Hopes are of the right Kind.

Firſt, It is of a *purifying Nature*. All thoſe who are poſſeſſed of it endeavour to *cleanſe themſelves from all Filthineſs, both of Fleſh and Spirit*, and to *perfect Holineſs in the Fear of God*. The Apoſtle *John* ſays, 1 Joh. 3. 3. *He that hath this Hope in him*, purifieth *himſelf even as God is pure*. *John* is here ſpeaking of the wonderful Love of God in taking any of the Sons of Men into a filial Relation to himſelf, and of that Viſion and bleſſed Likeneſs to which adopted Ones ſhall be advanced in the coming World; and from hence he argues that the Children of God, who have Hopes of being at laſt with him, will endeavour to purify themſelves, and to be prepared to enjoy an holy God. And certainly, there is no onethat really hopes for the Enjoyment of God in Heaven, but will endeavour to get into a Meetneſs for it here. Sin is a Separation from God, and the Glories of his Kingdom; and the more we are freed from Sin, we ſhall be the more pleaſing to God, and ſhall rejoice more in being preſent with him. And if Believers hope for the Happineſs of the heavenly World, Holineſs of Heart and Life will be much upon their Minds. Senſible of the Body of Sin which is in them, they will endeavour to mortify the Deeds of the Body, to withſtand their corrupt Inclinations, and live under the Influence of a Principle of Grace and Holineſs. If we hope for any particular Thing, we ſhall endeavour to remove every Thing that will obſtruct our Enjoyment of it; and if

we hope for Heaven, we ſhall carefully avoid every Thing that will tend to ſhut us out of Heaven; and as Sin is the greateſt Hindrance to our Happineſs, ſurely we ſhall endeavour to forſake it, and all Appearance of it.

Secondly, A good Hope makes the Soul *humble* before God. Humility is inſeparably connected with the Character of a true Chriſtian. That Method of Salvation with which he hath complied, tends in the very Nature of it, to abaſe and humble the Pride of Man; and in whomſoever Pride bears an habitual Sway, we may conclude, that ſuch an one is not under the Dominion of ſuitable Principles. Every true Chriſtian will acknowledge himſelf unworthy of the leaſt Favour at God's Hands; and if God hath vouchſafed ſo great a Favour as to give him a Title to everlaſting Bleſſedneſs, he will not think too highly of himſelf. All his Boaſting will be in God, and not in himſelf: He will not think he is more deſerving than another; but that he is equally ill-deſerving; and this will make him lie low before God and Men. "What, ſays the Believer, ſhall I grow "proud and conceited, becauſe God hath given me a "Title to Bleſſedneſs here and hereafter, when I de- "ſerve the oppoſite of both? Shall I think myſelf bet- "ter than my Neighbour, becauſe God hath in his "Sovereignty thus diſtinguiſhed me? Lord, let it be "far from me: Give me the Ornament of a meek and "humble Spirit, which is of great Price in thy Sight." A good Hope, as to an earthly Inheritance, may make us think highly of ourſelves; but a good Hope of an heavenly Inheritance will make us meek and lowly in Heart, meek and lowly in our Carriage towards others.

Thirdly, The good Hope of the Righteous *weans from this World.* This, and the other World, are quite different in the Happineſs they afford. The Com-

fort of the preſent Life is but tranſitory, at the beſt; the more we indulge ourſelves in it, the more it will take our Hearts off from the Happineſs of the other: The Satisfactions of the upper World are ſure and abiding. If then we have a juſt Title to the Bleſſedneſs of Heaven, it will teach and influence us to ſet lightly by all Things here below. If our Treaſure is in Heaven our Hearts will be where our Treaſure is; and conſequently Believers will converſe moſtly with heavenly Things. "What, ſays the Chriſtian, have I an endu-"ring Subſtance in Heaven, that is of more Value "than all this World; and ſhall I then ſet my Heart "upon any Thing below the Sun? Shall I have hea-"venly Riches, and at the ſame Time be fond of "worldly Wealth? Shall I have heavenly Honours, and "court the Honour that cometh from Man? Am I "entitled to heavenly Pleaſures, and ſhall I indulge "myſelf in Gratifications here below?" Every Thing appears to a true Chriſtian as not worthy to be compared with the Glory that ſhall hereafter be revealed; and he will ſurely ſet his Heart moſt upon that which he hath the greateſt Affection for.

Fourthly, A righteous Man is willing to have his Hopes *proved and tried.* This is the Temper of every true Chriſtian; and that is his Language, *Search me, O God, and know my Heart; try me, and know my Thoughts.* When Perſons have any Proſpect that they are Heirs to a worldly Eſtate, what Pains will they not take to ſee that their Title be good and indiſputable; and if we have any Reaſon to think we are Heirs to an heavenly Inheritance, ſhall we not rather double our Diligence, that our Hope may not fail us? Now all true Believers have an indiſputable Right to the Glories of Heaven: Indeed it may not appear indiſputable to them, and therefore they will accompliſh a diligent Search, that they may be fully ſatisfied as to the Matter. The Marks

Marks of Grace made known in the Goſpel, are ſure and evident Tokens of Chriſtianity; and he that is juſtly concerned in this Matter, will be careful to examine himſelf by theſe Evidences. Whether this is not a reaſonable Thought, my Brethren, judge ye. True Chriſtians will improve every Opportunity to get an Inſight into this Matter: They will ſeriouſly attend the Miniſtry of the Word, that they may be acquainted with the Truth of their Hopes: They will not think it hard if the Miniſters of the Goſpel lay themſelves out to prove them, and try them: They have Hearts open to Conviction, and are willing to know the worſt of themſelves that they may amend what is amiſs: They conſider of how great Importance it is, that their Title to Heaven be good, and are willing to have their Claims ſearched to the Bottom: They will leave no Stone without turning it, no Method without proving it. "O, ſays the Believer, "Let but my Title to Heaven be "good, and I value not the Pains I muſt take."

But we come,

Thirdly, To conſider *the Hope of the righteous Man, as it is exerciſed at Death. The Righteous hath Hope in his Death.* The near Approach of Death is generally the trying Time for the Hope of Man: If our Hopes that now eaſe and ſupport us, will not ſtand the Teſt in a dying Hour, we have Reaſon to fear that they are falſe and deluſory. If our Hopes are rightly founded, they will exert themſelves at the near View of Eternity. There is a vaſt Difference between the Hopes of a righteous and an unrighteous Man at Death: Both may have Hopes; but the Hopes of both are not founded upon the ſame Bottom.

Let a wicked Man, when he is on the Brink of the Grave, examine into the Grounds of his Confidence;

and he will have little reaſon to conclude any thing comfortable concerning himſelf. He may truſt in the Mercy of God; but as he muſt find that he hath no Title to the Mercy of God, by Virtue of any Faith in Chriſt, which he finds in him, he hath melancholy Reaſon to conclude that his Title is not good: He knows he hath not ſubmitted to Chriſt in the Goſpel Way; and therefore he ſees that his Hopes are groundleſs.

But, Let a Chriſtian when he is on the Brink of the Grave, enquire into the Foundation of his Hope, and he will experience that he hath had a Work of Grace wrought in him, which revives his Soul. Indeed he may not have a ſure and certain Hope of this; but he will find ſuch Experience of divine Operation that he will not dare to conclude that he is not a Chriſtian: The paſt Experience which he hath had, will now encourage him: He cannot abſolutely deny God's former Dealings with him; and as he cannot, he will have ſome Hopes. Accordingly we find, that every one paſſing out of Time into Eternity, that hath been favoured with the converting Influence of the Spirit, cannot reject the Evidence. Though he may not have Aſſurance; yet he hath Hope: His doubtful Expectations will lead him to examine himſelf; and he cannot deny the Operations of God upon his Soul. Some at Death have Aſſurance; all true Chriſtians have the Faith of Adherence: They would not part with that hope they have for Millions of Worlds: They in a good Meaſure rejoice in God as their God in Covenant: Though their Faith may be ſmall, yet it is ſure. They rejoice in Chriſt as their Saviour; and though they cannot actually call him their own, yet they dare not ſay that he is not their's: They rejoice in the Spirit; and though they cannot with Confidence call him their Comforter, yet at the ſame time they cannot deny his Operations upon their Hearts. They have

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ſome Degree of ſubſtantial Comfort, which the wicked Man hath not. The Scriptures ſay, *That Eye hath not ſeen, nor hath Ear heard what God hath laid up for thoſe that love him* : And all Believers having ſome Evidence of this Love, cannot but rejoice in ſome Degree. By Faith they behold Heaven as their's, and all the Happineſs of it : If Believers have not this Hope, who can lay Claim to it ? If thoſe who have had a Work of Grace wrought in them, cannot take the Comfort of it, how can thoſe who are graceleſs. True Chriſtians have good Reaſon to look upon Death as a conquered Enemy, and upon Heaven as unalterably their's.

Fourthly, *None but the Righteous can have a good Hope.* We have already conſidered Man as in a deplorable Condition by the Fall, having no Righteouſneſs and Strength in him, having violated God's holy Law. We have ſaid, That Man cannot be juſtified by the firſt Covenant, the Covenant of Works ; and that thoſe who are juſtified muſt be made righteous according to the Covenant of Grace : Will it not from hence follow that Juſtification is not by the Law but by Grace ? Fait, is unalterably fixed as the Condition of Salvation ; and how can Unbelievers be juſtified, or made righteous ſeeing they have not believed in Chriſt ? And how can they have a good Hope, unleſs they have good Reaſon to think that they are juſtified ? Every Unbeliever is condemned in the Word of God : therefore no Unbeliever can have a well-grounded Hope. Sinners may talk of their Obedience, and Willingneſs to be ſaved by Chriſt, as long and as much as they pleaſe, but unleſs their Willingneſs to be ſaved, engageth them to embrace Chriſt's Righteouſneſs as the Grounds of their Salvation, they cannot have any ſcriptural Hopes : *Chriſt is the End of the Law for Righteouſneſs, to all them that believe.* It muſt then be Faith in Chriſt's Righteouſneſs that gives ſpring to a rational, ſubſtantial Hope. This

Faith

Faith is either a Condition, or it is not; our Compliance or Non-compliance with it muſt make us happy or miſerable; otherwiſe God trifles with his Creatures, which we ought not to ſuppoſe; and there would be no need of a Condition, if we could have a good Hope, or be ſaved without it, certainly then it always preceeds a firm Hope in Man.

The APPLICATION now lies before us.

And,

Firſt, Let us examine ourſelves as to the Reaſon of that Hope which is in us. No doubt all of us here before God, hope for Salvation; but is there a true and falſe Hope? Oh let us be careful that we are not deceived: It is not long before we muſt all appear at the Judgment Seat of Chriſt, and then we ſhall be thro'ly tried. Are our Hopes well grounded? Are we in the Number of righteous Perſons? Have we Reaſon to think that we are juſtified? Have we been brought under a Work of Conviction by the Spirit of God, and been made to ſee that according to the firſt Covenant we are Sinners, and righteouſly condemned? Have we been brought to ſee that we are poor, wretched, miſerable, blind and naked? Have we been emptied of our ſelves, and been brought to lie low at the Feet of ſovereign Grace, acknowledging that we are unworthy of Mercy; and that God would be juſt if He ſhould caſt us off forever? Hath this Diſcovery lead us to ſeek for Salvation in the Goſpel, wherein Chriſt is revealed as a ſuitable and alſufficient Saviour? Have we conſulted the Terms of Salvation, that they are forſaking ourſelves, and relying upon Chriſt alone for Salvation? And have we accordingly ſubmitted to thoſe Terms? Can we upon Examination call Chriſt our Righteouſneſs; and can we ſay, that all our Hopes are founded upon Chriſt?

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Let us examine further into the Effects which this Hope produceth in us. Doth it influence us to labour after Holineſs? Doth it purify our Hearts, and work by Love, Love towards God, towards Chriſt, towards Holineſs, and the Brethren? Doth this Hope make us humble in our own Eyes? Doth it wean us from the World, and teach us the incomparableneſs of it to the future Glory? Are we willing to have our Hopes proved? Are we concerned leaſt we ſhould be deceived with a falſe Hope? Do we labour by examining the Word of God, by Prayer, and attending the Miniſtry of the Word, to ſee that our Hopes are well grounded? Be not deceived, my Brethren, a ſollicitous Concern ſhould always accompany this Matter: Every true Chriſtian is ſenſible of the Deceitfulneſs of his Heart, and therefore labours to ſecure an Hope, of which he ſhall never have Occaſion to be aſhamed. Look well to yourſelves, and remember that this Matter is of everlaſting Concernment.

Secondly, We may infer *the Bleſſedneſs of the Righteous.* They have ſure and certain Hopes of Comfort here and hereafter. They can entertain this joyful Reflection that *leaving their own Righteouſneſs, they have embraced the Righteouſneſs of God, which is by Faith in Chriſt Jeſus.* Their Hope is built upon him, who is the Rock of Ages; and Chriſt like a Rock is ſure and abiding. Amidſt the many Troubles which paſs over you, O Believer, you may caſt Anchor in Chriſt, who hath enter'd for you within the Vail: The Righteouſneſs of Chriſt being imputed to you, you need not fear with any Amazement. When Chriſt's Righteouſneſs was imputed to you, Chriſt was given to you alſo; and in him you have all that a Chriſtian can deſire. Chriſt is your's to teach you, Chriſt is your's to intercede for you, Chriſt is your's to ſanctify you: And be of good Comfort, Chriſt is your's at Death: He will give you

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ſuch Aids, which though they may not aſſure you of Salvation, yet will afford you great Matter of Joy. Endeavour to grow more acquainted with Chriſt, and he will be more acquainted with you ; and rejoice in this that He whom you now long after, will be the Object of your perpetual Enjoyment.

Thirdly, We gather that *all unrighteous Perſons are very miſerable.* They are without Hope, not having ſubmitted themſelves to the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt : And being deſtitute of this Hope, they have no good Proſpect before them. The Anger of God is revealed againſt them, and the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, unleſs embraced will be an Aggravation of their Miſery. You cannot, O Sinner, be happy ; for you are yet in your Sins, and Chriſt cannot be in you, the Hope of Glory hereafter. You may have ſome Sparks of Hope ; but unleſs you repent, and believe in Chriſt, they will enkindle the Flames of Hell, and make them to burn the more furiouſly.

Fourthly, If the Righteous have Hope in their Death, then *mourning Ones may be comforted, that their righteous Relatives and Friends who have died, are gone to the upper World of Enjoyment.* There all Believer's Hopes terminate ; and thoſe who are gone thither, carry Joy with them, and leave Occaſion of Joy behind them. Have we loſt deſireable Friends and Relatives ? And have we Reaſon to think that they died embracing Chriſt's Righteouſneſs ? Let us not be fearful and unbelieving about them : Their Death is our Loſs, but our Loſs is their Gain. Did they die expreſſing Faith in Chriſt and his Righteouſneſs ? It ſhould teach us the Precíouſneſs of Chriſt ; and of how great Benefit it is to be intereſted in Chriſt. Let us learn, my Brethren, from what we have ſeen and heard of the Faith of thoſe that have died, to lay a Foundation for the ſame Security

at Death. God hath been pleaſed of late to repeat Inſtances of Mortality among us: He hath taken away one and another, concerning whom we have good Reaſon to hope. A dear *Paſtor* hath been lately removed from us: And where are many beſides that uſed to accompany us in this Place of Worſhip? They are dead, and they died in Hope! TheHonour of God andReligion obliges us to mention one Inſtance of Mortality, that God hath ſet before us: We mean the Death of the vertuous and amiable Madam HUTCHINSON, to whom ſome of us paid our Funeral Reſpects the laſt Week. We have great Reaſon to think that She was one whom God made righteous, by imputing his Son's Righteouſneſs to her; and we have this confirmed in her *good Hope* at Death: She lived a righteous, and died like a juſtified Perſon: She was aſked the Morning before ſhe died, Whether ſhe had a good Hope as to that World ſhe was juſt entering into? She replied, "I gave my "ſelf up to God many Years ago; and now God, by "the Smiles of his Countenance, gives me abundant "Reaſon to think that I did it in Sincerity." Her Chriſtian Temper appeared through the Courſe of her Life: Her ſteady and ſerious Piety at Home in her Family and Cloſet, appeared to thoſe who were moſt with her; as they are ready to teſtify. She endeavoured to approve herſelf unto God, by walking ing cloſely with Him. The Hopes which ſhe entertained of the Happineſs of Heaven were ſuch as influenced her in her whole Behaviour: She was a prudent diſcreet Wife, a tender Mother, and a hearty Friend: She treated all about her with a peculiar Pleaſancy and Freedom: What is beſt of all is, that ſhe was a *Chriſtian*. God approved her; and ſhall we not approve of thoſe whom the Lord approveth. When ſhe was ſeized with her laſt Illneſs, which was but a few Days before ſhe died, tho' Providence placed her in wealthy Circumſtances, and in the midſt of many pleaſantComforts,

ſhe was willing to leave all for Chriſt. She had a better Hope and Proſpect than this World can afford. She had the Evidences of Grace, and theſe are better than all worldly Riches. Her Faith in future Glory was ſtrong and active, and this elevated her Hopes. She ſaid with Freedom and Alacrity, that ſhe was not afraid to die; and how could ſhe be afraid, when ſhe had ſuch a Hope. What a mighty Spring of Conſolation is this.

You, *honoured Sir*, Who have the greateſt Share in this Bereavement, have no Occaſion to mourn without Hope. God was pleaſed to favour you with a long Continuance together, and no doubt this made it more difficult and irkſome to part; but, Did your deceaſed *Conſort* leave Grounds to hope that ſhe was among the Righteous? Did ſhe exerciſe the *Hope of the righteous*, in her dying Moments? You may then mix Tears of Joy in this Cup of Affliction. We praiſe the Grace of God ſeen in you at this Time; and pray that you may have an abundant Supply of the Spirit to adorn your Character as a Chriſtian, eſpecially in this Day of Adverſity. May your Graces ſhine bright and clear! May they be purified in this Furnace of Affliction! And when God ſhall ſee fit to take you out of this Life, we cannot wiſh any thing better than that you may have Hope in your Death, and after Death have your Hope ſwallowed up in Enjoyment! May the Children whom God hath given you, be ſpared to be the Comfort of your advanced Years! May they be led to imitate the Virtues, and Copy after the Example of their deceaſed Mother, as ſhe copied after Chriſt! May *the* Son *be as a Plant, grown up in his Youth*; and *the* Daughters *be as Corner-Stones, poliſhed after the Similitude of a Palace!*

Fifthly, If we would be poſſeſſed of a *good Hope*, let us labour after *the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, to be imputed to us.* I truſt we are convinced that Hopes built

built upon any other Foundation are no better than the Hopes of the Hypocrite; and if our Hopes are of this Kind, what ſhall we do and ſay, when God taketh away our Souls. We conclude from Scripture, that *a Man is juſtified by Faith*, and *not by the Deeds of the Law*, certainly then thoſe who are not righteous in this Way, can't have very good Hopes. Let us labour firſt of all after the Character of the *righteous Man*: Let us ſee to it that the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt becomes our's; that we are brought to accept it, renouncing our own. O Sinner, you will want ſome ſubſtantial Comfort in the Hour of Death; and nothing but this will afford it. You may now build your Hopes upon yourſelves, your Prayers, and other Duties, and ſo make a Righteouſneſs of them; but it is no more than a Caſtle built in the Air, without any Foundation, Death will ſcale theſe high Walls of Conceit, and bring them down, and then you will be an unavoidable Prey for Satan. On the other Hand, if your Hopes are built on the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt entirely, then in the near Views of Eternity you will find ſuch Supports as you would not part with for all the Enjoyments of Life. Let this Queſtion be much upon your Minds, What if my Hope ſhould at laſt deceive me? And let the Poſſibility of the Thing quicken us all to great Jealouſy and Concern. And here we think it very neceſſary to charge and caution you, not ſo much as to think you are juſtified, unleſs, at the ſame Time, you find you are under the Influence of an Heart-purifying Hope, of an Hope that teacheth you Mortification and Self-denial, an Hope that attacheth your Affections to heavenly Things, and diſpoſeth you to accompliſh a frequent and diligent Search into your Hearts: Theſe Things alway accompany Juſtification, and are of equal Neceſſity with it. We ſhall add one Paſſage of Scripture, as the Cloſe of the whole, *Matthew* 7. 24, —— 27. *Therefore, whoſoever heareth theſe Sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken*

him unto a wiſe Man that built his Houſe upon a Rock: And the Rain deſcended, and the Floods came, and the Wind blew, and beat upon that Houſe, and it fell not; for it was founded on a Rock. And every one that heareth theſe Sayings of mine, and doth them not, ſhall be likened unto a fooliſh Man, that built his Houſe upon the Sand: And the Rain deſcended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat upon that Houſe, and it fell, and great was the Fall of it. I leave you, my Brethren, to apply it: May God make the effectual Application.

F I N I S.